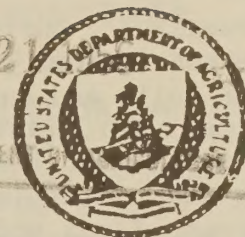


NORTH CAROLINA



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NO. 212

RALEIGH, N. C.

JULY 20, 1956

N. C. COTTON ACREAGE LOWEST SINCE 1871

Cotton in cultivation on July 1 in North Carolina is estimated at 465,000 acres. Such an acreage is 5.5 percent below the 492,000 acres in cultivation on July 1 last year, and 33 percent below the 1945-54 average of 690,000. Assuming 10-year average abandonment of 1.2 percent would result in 459,000 acres for harvest this year. This would be the smallest acreage of cotton harvested in North Carolina since 1871.

The 1956 season to-date has been one of the most unfavorable in recent years for cotton. Unfavorable weather conditions

(Continued on page 2)

N. C. CORN PRODUCTION EXPECTED TO FALL BELOW LAST YEAR

A North Carolina corn crop of 63,008,000 bushels for 1956 is forecast from condition reported by growers as of July 1. A crop of that size would be about 7.5 million bushels, or 11 percent, below the revised estimate of 70,482,000 bushels produced in 1955. The smaller corn harvest in prospect for this year results both from reduced acreage and from an average per-acre yield expected to fall below the record high 1955 yield.

This year's estimate of 1,969,000 acres for harvest is five percent below the revised estimate of 2,073,000 acres harvested in 1955. Average yield per acre, forecast at 32.0 bushels is two bushels short of last year's 34.0 bushel yield. If realized, this year's expected yield would still be a near-record for the State, having been exceeded only in 1955 and 1950.

The continuing trend toward increased use of hybrid seed and improved cultural practices both contribute to a general

(Continued on page 2)

JULY 1 N. C. FLUE-CURED ESTIMATE 20 PERCENT BELOW 1955 CROP

Production of flue-cured tobacco in North Carolina from the crop of 1956, forecast on July 1 at 783,625,000 pounds, would be 20 percent below the record production of 978,775,000 pounds in 1955. Both acreage for harvest and prospective yields per acre are somewhat below last year's levels. Production of burley tobacco is expected to total 18,130,000 pounds -- only slightly below the 18,620,000 pounds produced last year.

This year's estimate of 581,000 acres of flue-cured tobacco for harvest is eleven percent below the 653,000 acres harvested last year. Flue-cured yield is forecast at 1,349 pounds, compared with the record high yield of 1,499 pounds harvested last year.

A succession of spring freezes greatly retarded growth of tobacco in plant beds and delayed transplanting to fields. After plants were set to the fields, recurring cool weather and lack of adequate rainfall continued to hamper tobacco growth so that it made little progress before the last of May. Rains in early June were beneficial, but by mid-June dry soils and high temperatures were stunting plant growth. Size of plants in relation to age was unusually small on July 1 and much of the earliest maturing crop was "buttoning out" before stalks had produced the desired number of leaves.

Rains fell throughout the flue-cured area during the past week and the condition of the crop improved over that which existed on July 1. The yield and production forecast for North Carolina by types, as of July 1, is as follows:

Type 11 (Middle and Old Belt): Type 11 production is estimated at 266,725,000 pounds from 227,000 acres for an average yield of 1,175 pounds. This is 67,325,000

(Continued on page 2)

COTTON (Continued)

prevailed during the normal planting season, being characterized by prolonged wet soils and cool days and nights. State-wide, the current crop is from two to three weeks behind schedule. The crop is more irregular than usual both between areas, farms and fields on the same farm. Growers in the Piedmont state that part of the crop in the same field germinated two weeks later than other parts of the field.

The current crop will, of course, reach maturity later than usual. Growers commented frequently on the fact that cool weather during May and prolonged dry weather during June had retarded plant growth. Dry soils in the Piedmont have been more damaging than in most of the coastal counties.

UNITED STATES

Acreage of cotton in cultivation on July 1 in the U. S. is estimated at 16,962,000 -- 3.0 percent less than the 17,506,000 acres in cultivation on July 1 last year.

COTTON AS OF JULY 1, 1956

State	Acreage In Cultivation July 1			
	Average Aband.	Average	1955	1956
	1946-55	1945-54 (000)	(000)	(000)
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Acres</i>
N. C.	1.2	690	492	465
S. C.	0.6	1,051	745	695
Ga.	0.7	1,300	907	865
Tenn.	1.2	766	581	552
Ala.	0.5	1,521	1,060	995
Miss.	2.2	2,398	1,745	1,640
Mo.	3.0	488	396	377
Ark.	2.2	2,010	1,481	1,400
La.	1.6	839	626	595
Okla.	5.2	1,171	818	800
Texas	3.7	8,969	7,270	7,175
N. M.	2.5	226	189	187
Ariz.	0.4	385	368	378
Calif.	0.5	849	764	775
Others*	2.8	82	64	63
U. S.	2.5	22,746	17,506	16,962

* Sums of acreage for "other States" rounded to thousands for inclusion in United States totals.

CORN (Continued)

upturn in per-acre yields. On the other hand, the adverse effects of climatic conditions in some recent years, and up to July 1 of this year, have tended to offset the apparent advantages of improved practices followed by growers.

Seeding of corn was delayed, and considerable replanting was necessitated, as the result of continued cold weather in early spring. Consequently the crop is considered to be somewhat later than usual. Also, droughty conditions during June have hindered normal development of this year's crop. Except for some extreme eastern and southeastern counties, corn was generally suffering from lack of moisture on July 1.

TOBACCO (Continued)

pounds or about 20 percent less than the 1955 crop. The crop is less advanced in this area than in Types 12 and 13, with much of the crop transplanted and reset during the dry-hot weather the first part of June.

Type 12 (Eastern or New Bright Belt): Production of Type 12 Tobacco (All produced in North Carolina) is estimated at 408,900,000 pounds from 282,000 acres for an average yield of 1,450 pounds per acre. If current prospects materialize, the 1956 crop will be 20.6 percent less than the 1955 crop of 515,125,000 pounds. The July 1 estimated yield per acre is 175 pounds below the 1955 record of 1,625 pounds.

Type 13 (Border Belt): Type 13 production in North Carolina is estimated at 108,000,000 pounds from 72,000 acres for an average yield of 1,500 pounds per acre. This is the second highest yield of record but a crop of 108,000,000 pounds, if realized, would be 16.7 percent below last year and the smallest Type 13 crop since 1950.

The total U. S. flue-cured crop is estimated at 1,193,530,000 pounds. This is 289,515,000 pounds or 19.5 percent less than the 1955 crop of 1,483,045,000 pounds.

Type 31 (Burley-Light Air-Cured): The North Carolina 1956 burley crop is estimated at 18,130,000 pounds from 9,800 acres for an average yield per acre of 1,850 pounds. This compares with the 1955 crop of 18,620,000 pounds and average yield per acre of 1,900 pounds. U. S. production of burley tobacco is estimated at 462,587,000 pounds compared with the 1955 crop of 469,977,000 pounds.

RECORD WHEAT YIELD

Reports from Tar Heel growers indicate that a new record wheat yield per acre of 24 bushels was harvested from 354,000 acres for a total production of 8,496,000 bushels. The previous record yield of 23 bushels was set in 1952. The new record yield of 24 bushels is slightly more than double the 1930-1940 average yield and is slightly more than three times the average 1905-1909 yield. This year's production is 24 percent above the 6,858,000 bushels produced last year and is the largest production since 1952.

BARLEY PRODUCTION UP 25 PERCENT

The 1956 North Carolina barley crop is forecast at 2,065,000 bushels. This is 25 percent above the 1955 crop and sets a new record production of barley. The estimated yield per acre of 35 bushels sets a new record and compares with the previous record yield of 34.5 bushels in 1953.

OATS PRODUCTION UP

The 1956 oats crop is forecast at a new record production of 17,686,000 bushels. This is 16.5 percent above the 1955 crop and compares with the previous record crop of 16,380,000 bushels in 1954. The estimated 1956 average yield per acre at 37.0 bushels is also a new record and compares with the previous record yield of 36 bushels in 1954.

SOYBEAN ACREAGE UP

Reports from North Carolina producers indicate that they expect to harvest 396,000 acres of soybeans for beans in 1956. Such an acreage would be 69,000 acres above the 430,000 acres harvested in 1955 and 51 percent above the 1945-54 average.

Soybeans grown alone this year for all purposes at 516,000 acres is 20 percent above the 430,000 acres planted in 1955.

RYE PRODUCTION UP

The 1956 rye crop also set a new record yield per acre. Production from this year's crop is estimated at 448,000 bushels. This is 38 percent above the 1955 crop of 324,000 bushels.

SWEET POTATO PRODUCTION EXPECTED TO BE DOWN

The 1956 sweet potato crop is estimated at 4,080,000 bushels -- about 7 percent less than the 4,364,000 bushels produced in 1955. On the basis of reports from growers on July 1, the average yield is estimated to be 102 bushels per acre. An average yield of 102 bushels would be 7 bushels below the 109 bushels obtained in 1955.

Estimated acreage for harvest, at 40,000 acres, is the same as the acreage harvested during the 1955 season.

IRISH POTATO PRODUCTION DOWN

Based upon reports from growers as of July 1, a potato crop of 4,578,000 bushels is forecast for 1956. The current production estimate is about 20 percent below 1955.

July 1 prospects point to a yield per acre of 127 bushels, compared with 155 last year.

Acreage for harvest is estimated to be 36,000 acres, compared with 37,000 last year; thus, the decreased production is attributed to both reduced yields and a reduction in acreage.

JUNE MILK PRODUCTION ABOVE A YEAR EARLIER

Farm production of milk in the State during June was estimated at 152 million pounds. The June 1956 production was 10 million pounds below the 162 million pounds produced in May and 4 million pounds above June 1955.

Pasture condition at 65 percent compares with a condition of 83 percent last month and condition of 79 percent a year earlier.

The 3 percent increase in production from a year ago is attributed to the continued improvement and management of dairy herds.

JUNE EGG PRODUCTION UP

Egg production in North Carolina during June 1956 is estimated at 137 million eggs -- 9 percent above the June 1955 production of 126 million.

The number of layers on North Carolina farms during June 1956 was placed at 8,370 thousand, an increase of 874 thousand from June 1955.

Rate of egg production in June was 1,638 eggs per 100 layers, compared with 1,686 a year ago.

UNITED STATES ESTIMATED ACREAGE, YIELD AND PRODUCTION OF CROPS, JULY 1, 1956 WITH COMPARISONS

CROPS	UNIT	ACREAGE (IN THOUSANDS)			YIELD (IN UNITS)			PRODUCTION (IN THOUSANDS)		
		Average 1945-54	Harvested 1955 <i>L/</i>	Indicated 1956	Average 1945-54	1955	Indicated 1956	Average 1945-54	1955	Indicated 1956
Corn, <i>All</i>	Bu.	83,260	79,900	77,596	37.1	40.6	42.1	3,084,389	3,241,536	3,266,688
Wheat, Winter.....	Bu.	47,810	33,660	35,372	18.3	20.9	20.3	873,690	703,047	717,086
Wheat, <i>All</i>	Bu.	67,192	47,255	50,466	17.1	19.8	18.3	1,148,289	936,761	922,262
Oats.....	Bu.	38,912	39,138	35,427	34.1	38.3	32.3	1,327,496	1,499,282	1,143,929
Barley.....	Bu.	10,443	14,553	12,867	26.6	27.5	27.0	278,166	400,295	347,696
Rye.....	Bu.	1,714	2,092	1,724	12.5	14.2	12.8	21,558	29,678	21,986
TOBACCO:										
Flue-Cured.....	Lbs.	1,049.2	990.7	880.2	1,214	1,497	1,356	1,270,897	1,483,045	1,193,530
Burley.....	Lbs.	447.0	310.4	311.9	1,310	1,514	1,483	583,853	469,977	462,587
<i>All Types</i>	Lbs.	1,726.1	1,496.7	1,379.8	1,236	1,467	1,370	2,128,194	2,195,788	1,890,888
Cotton <i>2/</i>	Lbs.	22,746	17,506	16,962	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sorghums, <i>All</i>	Bu.	13,277	20,874	19,897	-	-	-	-	-	-
Irish Potatoes, <i>All 3/</i>	Bu.	1,525	1,414	1,402	248	268	-	377,267	378,410	-
Sweetpotatoes. <i>3/</i>	Bu.	378.4	341.4	286.8	96	112	99	36,456	38,084	28,516
Soybeans, Alone <i>All Purposes</i>	-	14,279	19,710	21,959	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soybeans, For Beans.....	Bu.	12,698	18,668	20,953	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peanuts, Alone <i>All Purposes</i> .	-	2,902	1,898	1,868	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peanuts, Picked & Threshed..	Lbs.	2,387	1,691	-	790	925	-	1,809,520	1,564,530	-
HAY:										
<i>All</i>	Tons	74,382	75,549	75,595	1.39	1.49	1.42	103,648	112,782	107,111
Alfalfa.....	Tons	18,941	28,432	29,719	2.19	2.08	2.00	41,315	59,195	59,343
Clover & Timothy <i>4/</i> ...	Tons	20,910	16,506	15,316	1.41	1.46	1.34	29,509	24,174	20,566
Lespedeza.....	Tons	6,046	4,063	4,425	1.03	1.16	1.01	6,354	4,708	4,488
Pasture, Condition.....	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	84	83	71
Peaches, <i>All</i>	Bu.	-	-	-	-	-	-	66,989	51,827	64,412
Apples, Commercial <i>5/</i>	Bu.	-	-	-	-	-	-	105,920	106,234	89,263
Pears, <i>All</i>	Bu.	-	-	-	-	-	-	30,230	29,622	30,377
Grapes, <i>All</i>	Tons	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,906	3,237	2,974

+

- ^{1/} Revised -- based on 1954 Census and other data.
- ^{2/} Acres in cultivation July 1.
- ^{3/} Averages 1949-54.
- ^{4/} Excludes Sweet Clover and Lespedeza Hay.
- ^{5/} Estimates of the commercial crop refer to total production of apples in commercial apple areas of each State.
- ^{6/} For some States in certain years production includes some quantities unharvested on account of economic conditions.

NORTH CAROLINA

ESTIMATED ACREAGE, YIELD AND PRODUCTION OF CROPS, JULY 1, 1956 WITH COMPARISONS

CROPS	UNIT	ACREAGE (IN THOUSANDS)			YIELD (IN UNITS)			PRODUCTION (IN THOUSANDS)		
		Average 1945-54	Harvested 1955 <u>4</u>	Indicated 1956	Average 1945-54	1955	Indicated 1956	Average 1945-54	1955	Indicated 1956
Corn, All.....	Bu.	2,188	2,073	1,969	28.6	34.0	32.0	62,535	70,482	63,008
Wheat, Winter.....	Bu.	392	319	354	17.9	21.5	24.0	7,028	6,858	8,496
Oats.....	Bu.	348	460	478	31.4	33.0	37.0	10,964	15,180	17,686
Barley.....	Bu.	40	59	59	28.5	28.0	35.0	1,166	1,652	2,065
Rye.....	Bu.	21	24	28	12.8	13.5	16.0	1,271	324	448
TOBACCO: All.....	Lbs.	710.4	662.8	590.8	1,229	1,505	1,357	871,285	997,395	801,755
Type 11.....	Lbs.	272.1	255.0	227.0	1,129	1,310	1,175	306,828	334,050	266,725
Type 12.....	Lbs.	341.3	317.0	282.0	1,288	1,625	1,450	438,150	515,125	408,900
Type 13.....	Lbs.	85.8	81.0	72.0	1,258	1,600	1,500	107,702	129,600	108,000
All Flue-Cured.....	Lbs.	699.2	653.0	581.0	-	-	-	852,680	978,775	783,625
Type 31, Burley.....	Lbs.	11.2	9.8	9.8	1,650	1,900	1,850	18,605	18,620	18,130
Cotton <u>2</u>	Lbs.	690	492	465	1,220	1,499	1,349	-	-	-
Sorghum, All.....	Bu.	45	114	100	142	155	127	6,810	5,717	4,578
Irish Potatoes, All <u>3</u>	Bu.	48	37	36	107	109	102	4,565	4,364	4,080
Sweetpotatoes <u>3</u>	Bu.	46.5	40.0	40.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soybeans, Alone All Purposes...	-	386	430	516	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soybeans, For Beans.....	Bu.	263	327	396	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peanuts, Alone All Purposes...	-	258	183	204	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peanuts, Picked and Threshed...	Lbs.	244	190	-	1,218	1,075	-	286,900	204,250	-
Hay: All.....	Tons	1,253	1,154	1,145	1.01	1.10	.99	1,262	1,267	1,130
Clover and Timothy <u>4</u>	Tons	105	105	102	1.12	1.20	1.10	118	126	112
Alfalfa.....	Tons	48	80	84	2.04	2.10	1.80	95	168	151
Lespedeza.....	Tons	505	391	407	1.02	1.05	.90	518	411	366
Pasture, Condition.....	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	79	65
Peaches, All.....	Bu.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,559	<u>6</u> / 40	840
Apples, Commercial <u>5</u>	Bu.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,239	10	1,500
Pears, All.....	Bu.	-	-	-	-	-	-	133	70	70
Grapes, All.....	Tons	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.7	1.1	1.4

1 Revised -- based on 1954 Census and other data.
2 Acres in cultivation July 1.
3 Averages 1949-54
4 Excludes sweetclover and lespedeza hay.
5 Estimates of commercial crop refer to total production in commercial apple areas.
6 1955 crop almost a complete failure because of spring freeze. A few peaches may be produced but prospective production is too small to warrant a forecast at this time.

CORN ACREAGE PLANTED WITH HYBRID SEED SELECTED STATES, 1955-1956

STATE	1955			1956		
	All Corn Acreage Planted	Percent Planted With Hybrid Seed	Indicated Hybrid Corn Acreage	All Corn Acreage Planted	Percent Planted With Hybrid Seed	Indicated Hybrid Corn Acreage
	(000)	%	(000)	(000)	%	(000)
N. C.	2,139	60.5	1,294	2,011	70.5	1,418
Del.	172	99.0	170	155	99.0	153
Md.	523	98.5	515	481	98.0	471
Va.	879	90.0	791	817	90.5	739
W. Va.	188	83.5	157	171	84.0	144
S. C.	1,055	49.0	517	1,013	54.5	552
Ga.	2,820	64.0	1,805	2,735	69.5	1,901
Fla.	599	70.0	419	587	84.0	493
Ky.	1,941	92.5	1,795	1,863	93.5	1,742
Tenn.	1,774	62.5	1,109	1,792	71.5	1,281
Ala.	2,276	65.5	1,491	2,276	70.5	1,605
Miss.	1,642	49.0	805	1,511	49.5	748
Ark.	681	76.5	521	667	77.5	517
La.	647	48.0	311	628	51.5	323
Ohio	3,752	99.5	3,733	3,677	99.5	3,659
Iowa	10,799	100.0	10,799	10,745	100.0	10,745
Neb.	6,714	96.5	6,479	6,311	95.5	6,027
U. S.	81,492	89.4	72,856	79,016	90.8	71,757

N. C. 1955 PEANUT PRODUCTION LOWEST SINCE 1933

On the basis of final reports from growers, inspection, sales and millings data, peanut production in North Carolina in 1955 is estimated at 204,250,000 pounds. This is the lowest production since the 1933 crop of 180,500,000 pounds. Production in 1955 was 18.6 percent less than the 1954 crop of 250,800,000 pounds and 28.8 percent less than the 1945-54 average of 286,900,000 pounds.

The 1955 crop was harvested from 190,000 acres compared with 176,000 acres in 1954. The 1955 yield per acre of 1,075 pounds is 24.6 percent less than the 1954 yield of 1,425 pounds.

N. C. PEACH CROP BELOW AVERAGE

The 1956 Tar Heel peach crop is estimated at 840,000 bushels as of July 1. This compares with the 1955 crop failure and is 24 percent less than 1954 and 46 percent below the 1945-54 average crop.

The 1956 U. S. peach crop is estimated at 64,412,000 bushels -- 24 percent larger than last year and 4 percent larger than the 1954 crop, but 4 percent smaller than average.

N. C. APPLE CROP ABOVE AVERAGE

The 1956 North Carolina commercial apple crop is forecast at 1,500,000 bushels as of July 1. A crop of this size, if realized, would be 12 percent below the 1954 crop, but 21 percent above the 1945-54 average crop.

The 1956 U. S. commercial apple crop is estimated at 89,263,000 bushels, about 16 percent below the 1955 production and also 16 percent below the 10-year average crop of 1,239,000 bushels.

HIGHER PRODUCTION OF GRAPES

Grape production in North Carolina is estimated at 1,400,000 tons as of July 1. This compares with the 1955 crop of 1,100,000 tons and the 1945-54 average crop of 2,700,000 tons.

U. S. grape production is forecast at 2,974,465,000 tons or 8.1 percent less than the 1955 crop of 3,237,350,000 tons.

PEAR CROP BELOW AVERAGE

The 1956 North Carolina pear crop is forecast at 70,000 bushels as of July 1. This is considerably above the freeze damaged 1955 crop of 10,000 bushels, but is 22 percent less than the 1954 crop and 47 less than the 10-year average crop of 133,000 bushels.

WEATHER SUMMARY FOR JUNE, 1956

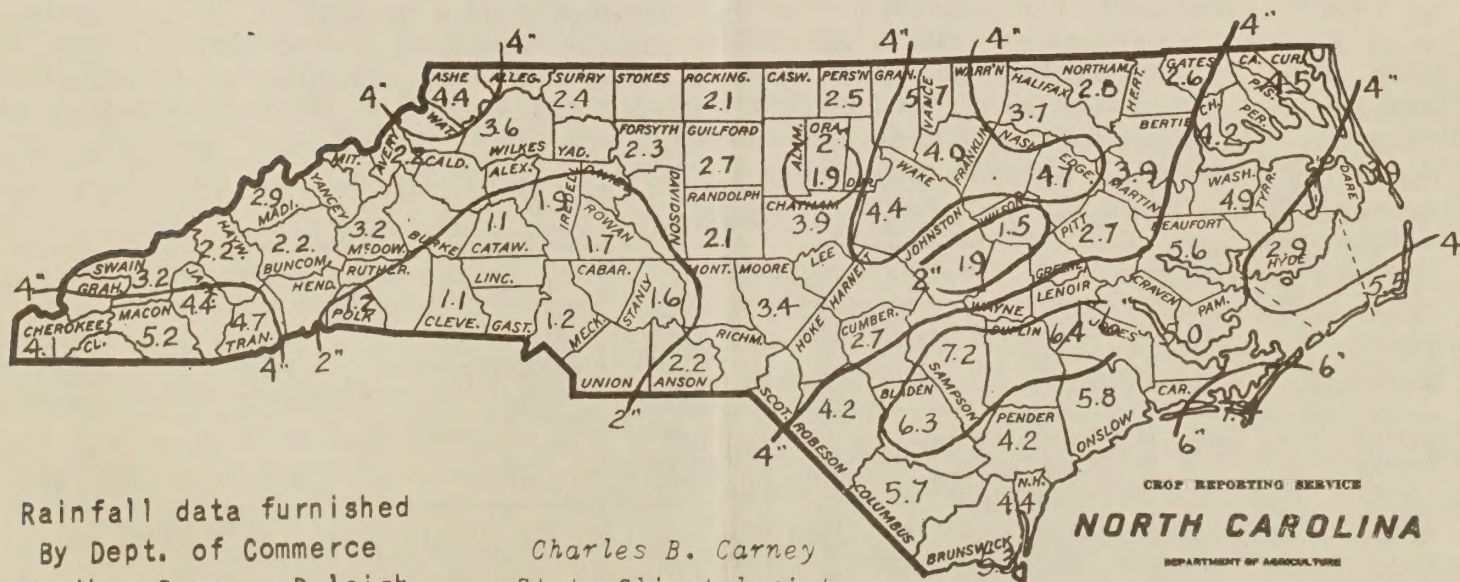
June weather was typical of the time of year, with sunny days broken by an increasing number of afternoon thunder-showers as the month progressed. The only persistently cloudy weather came around the 19th, in connection with a cool weather front which stalled over South Carolina and Georgia as it was pushed slowly down the Atlantic coast by high pressure centered over New England. A shallow low pressure storm off shore on the 7th and 8th caused gloomy weather along the shoreline, but its effects did not reach far inland. The highest wind recorded at Hatteras with this storm was only 36 miles per hour; at inland stations winds were not high during June except where affected briefly by local thunder-showers.

Temperatures in June fluctuated considerably over North Carolina, reaching unseasonably low levels during the first week and again around the 19th of the month, but remaining a little on the warm side of normal most other days. Minimum readings below 50 degrees were recorded at a number of stations on the 3rd and 4th of June, and some places reported the coolest weather of record for one or more of these dates. The cool weather around

the 19th did not generally drop below the fifties, but even so was the lowest on record for the date at a few points with long records. The dates of the highest temperatures (mostly in the mid- 90's) varied from place to place, depending on the occurrence of local afternoon thunder-showers. Average temperatures for the month were near normal at most stations.

Rainfall was extremely variable over North Carolina during June, but followed a general pattern: a few rainy days near the first of the month, with a week or more of dry weather immediately following; rainy weather around the 19th, and then scattered thundershowers. A few stations failed to get as much as an inch from either of the general rain periods, and then fell short also on the thunder-showers. The driest section was the southwestern Piedmont, where the month's total was from one to two inches. The first few rows of counties along the coast got the most rainfall, most stations there reporting four or more inches. There was considerable variation over fairly short range, however, with up to five inches difference in the monthly totals at stations in adjoining counties.

INCHES OF RAINFALL FOR JUNE, 1956



FARM REPORT

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CORN STOCKS ON N. C. FARMS

Farm stocks of corn on North Carolina farms on July 1 were estimated at 13, - 973,000 bushels. Corn on farms is about 1 percent above the 1945-54 average and 42 percent above July 1955 stocks.

July 1 farm stocks of wheat in the State totaled 274,000 bushels -- 6 percent above July 1, 1955 but 33 percent below the 10-year average. Rye stocks at 19,000 bushels were 6,000 bushels

42 PERCENT ABOVE LAST YEAR

above average and 7,000 bushels above a year earlier.

Farm stocks of oats at 911,000 bushels and barley at 83,000 bushels were 236,000 bushels and 71,000 bushels, respectively, below the same date a year ago.

Farm stocks of soybeans were estimated at 152,000 bushels. This compares with 49,000 a year earlier and with the 10-year average of 122,000 bushels.

GRAIN STOCKS ON FARMS, JULY 1, 1955 1/

CROP	NORTH CAROLINA			UNITED STATES		
	Average 1945-54	1955	1956	Average 1945-54	1955	1956
<i>Thousand Bushels</i>						
Corn.....	13,861	9,820	13,973	792,768	960,056	993,311
Wheat.....	408	258	274	70,538	39,108	67,716
Oats.....	845	1,147	911	225,143	237,214	271,674
Barley.....	86	154	83	37,823	44,153	39,499
Rye.....	13	12	19	2,010	3,951	2,373
Soybeans.....	122	49	152	8,219	32,755	7,131

1/ Old Crop.